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✓ Latest release

Labour Force Status of Families

Explores how families engage with the labour market

Reference period June 2023

Released 24/10/2023

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Key statistics

In June 2023:

- There were 7.5 million families, an increase of 1.0 million since June 2013
- 1 in 7 families were one parent families (14.7%)
- There were 1.4 million jobless families (18.9%)
- Of the 6.2 million couple families, 2.4% were same-sex couples

Summary

Between June 2022 and June 2023,

- For couple families with dependants, joblessness increased from 2.7% to 3.0%.
- Couple families with both partners employed increased 1.9%.
- Couple families with dependants where neither parent was employed increased from 3.6% to 4.1%.

In June 2023,

- 7.8% of families with children under 15 were jobless families.
- 25.7% of couple families with children aged 0-4 years had both parents working full-time.
- 76.4% of couple families with children under 15 had mothers who were employed.
- 22.1% of couple families with children under 15 had one parent employed.

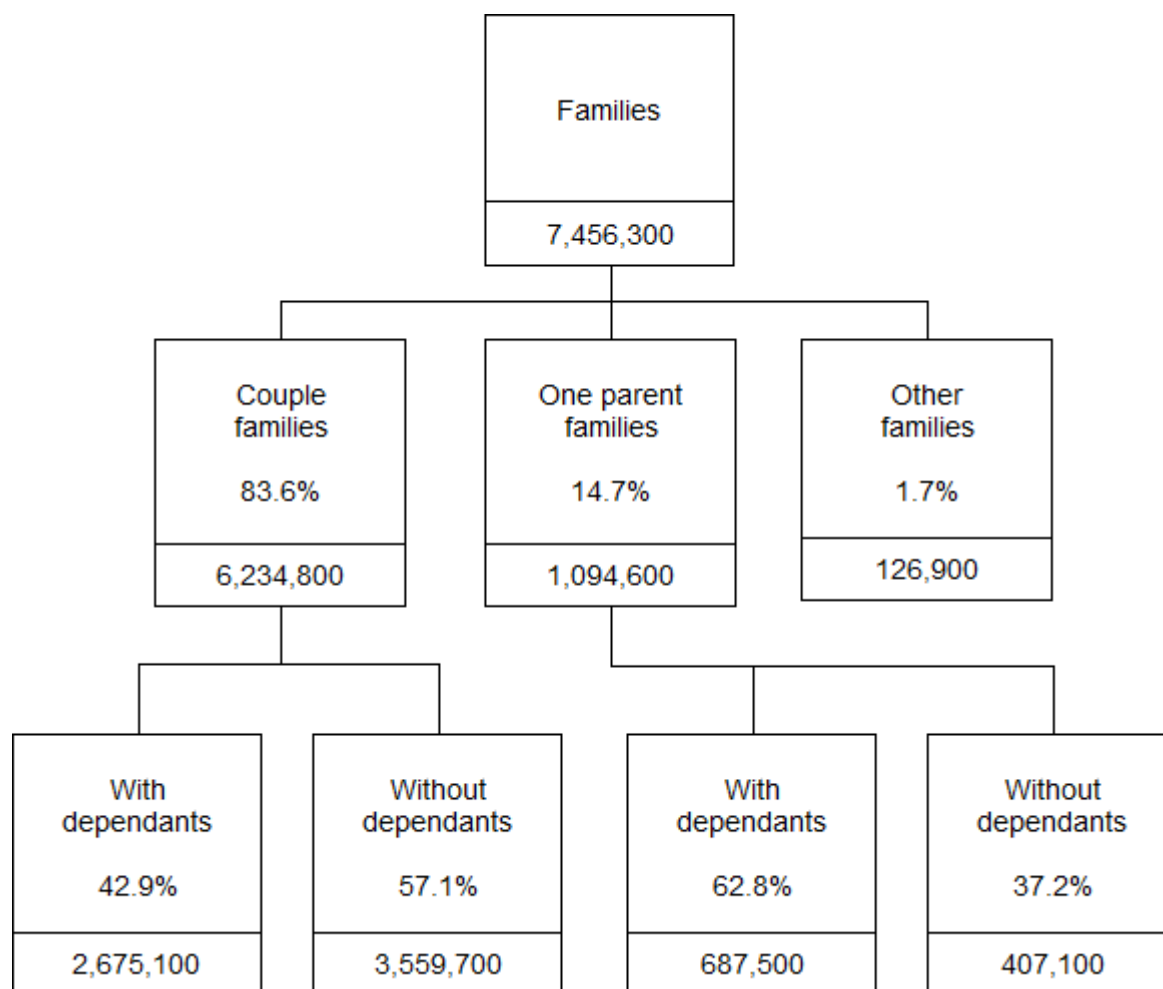
All families

In June 2023, there were 7.5 million families, an increase of 1.0 million (15%) since June 2013. Of these:

- 6.2 million (83.6%) were couple families.
- 1.1 million (14.7%) were one parent families with 80.3% of these being single mothers.
- 130,000 (1.7%) were classified as 'other families', where at least two people were related in some way other than as a couple or as a parent and child (such as adult-age siblings).

3.4 million (45.1%) were families with dependants, of which 81.7% were families with children under 15.

The following flowchart summarises the breakdown of the main family types.



What is a family?

A family is defined as two related people who live in the same household. This includes all families such as couples with and without children, including same-sex couples, couples with dependants, single mothers or fathers with children, and siblings living together. At least one person in the family has to be 15 years or over. A household may contain more than one family.

See the [Labour Force Status of Families methodology \(/methodologies/labour-force-status-families-methodology/jun-2023\)](/methodologies/labour-force-status-families-methodology/jun-2023) for more information.

Couple families

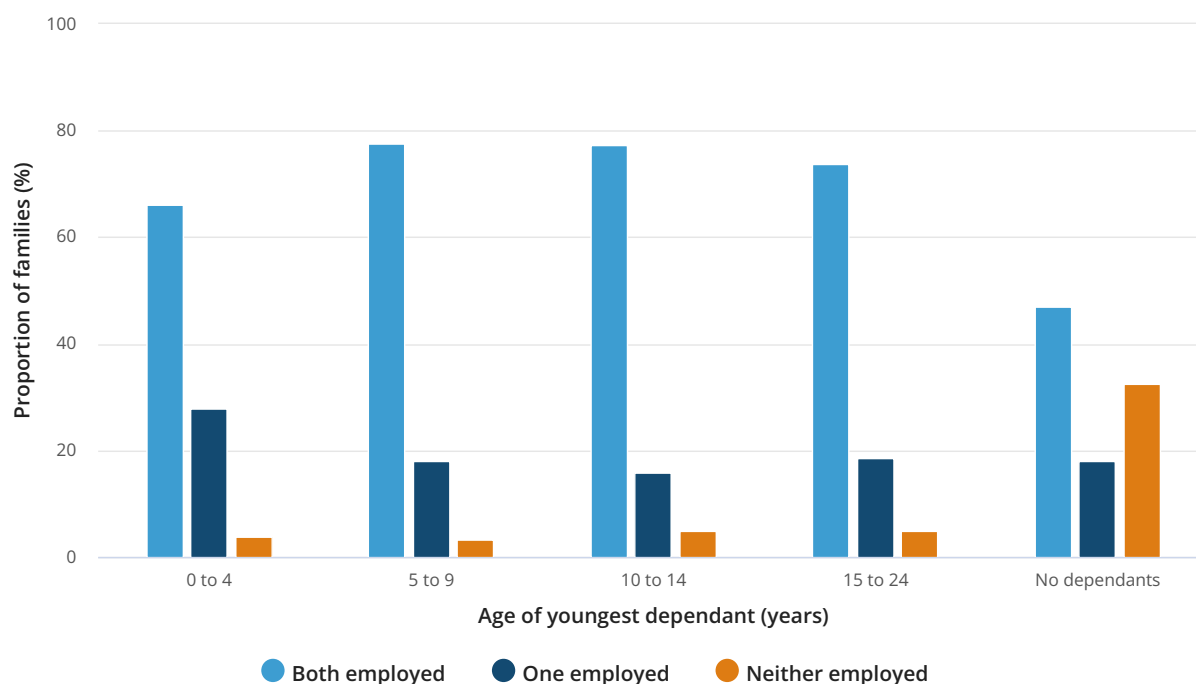
Couple families are formed around two people in a couple relationship who both usually reside in the same household. Couple families can be formed around opposite-sex couples

or same-sex couples, and they can be with or without dependants (which include children under 15 and dependent students aged 15-24 years).

In June 2023, there were 6.2 million couple families, including:

- 2.6 million opposite-sex couple families with dependants.
- 3.6 million couple families without dependants.
- 150,000 same-sex couple families, an increase from 41,000 in June 2013 and an increase from 103,000 in June 2022.
- 1.9 million couple families with dependants where both parents were employed.

Graph 1 - Couple families by employed parents and age of youngest dependant, June 2023



- Data sourced from Table 9 and Table 3 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads\)](#). State breakdowns and revised estimates for previous years are also available.

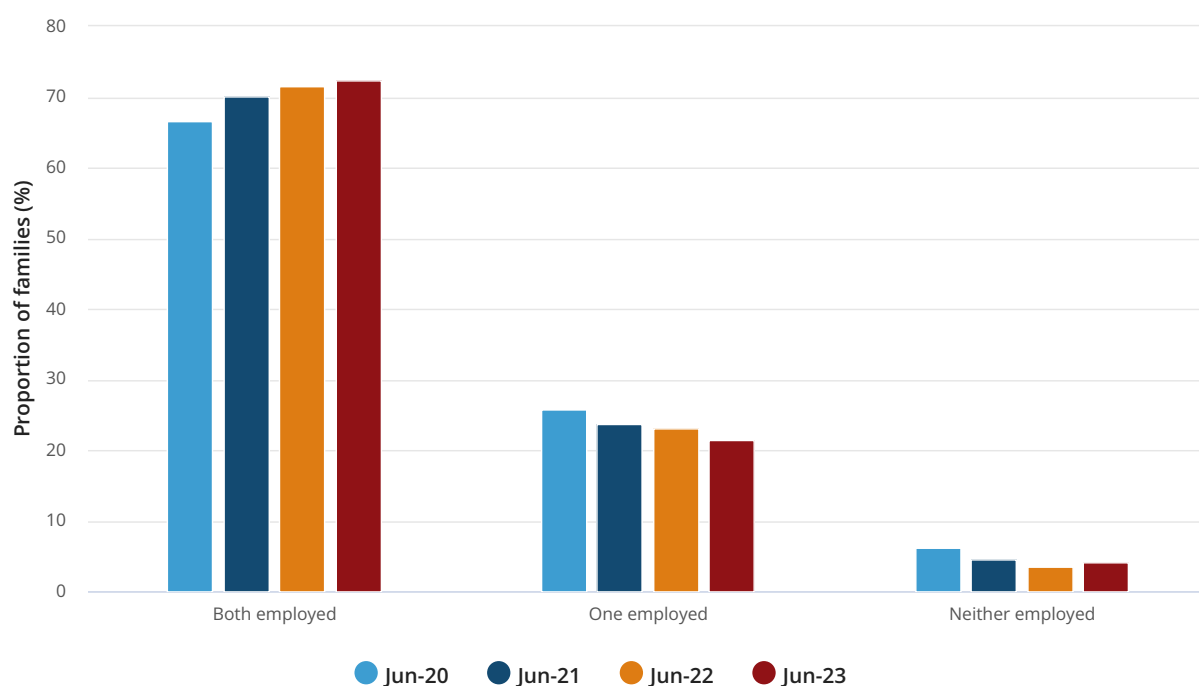
Couple families with dependants

The proportion of couple families with dependants in which one or both parents were employed was 93.9% (2.5 million) in June 2023, down from 94.5% in June 2022. The proportion of couple families with dependants where both parents were not employed increased from 3.6% in June 2022 to 4.1% (110,000 families) in June 2023.

The majority (72.4%) of couple families with dependants had both parents employed, of which 1.6 million (82.1%) had at least one child aged under 15 years.

There were 470,000 couple families which had a youngest dependant aged 15–24 years living with them. This represented 7.5% of all couple families.

Graph 2 - Couple families with dependants by employed parents, June 2020 to June 2023

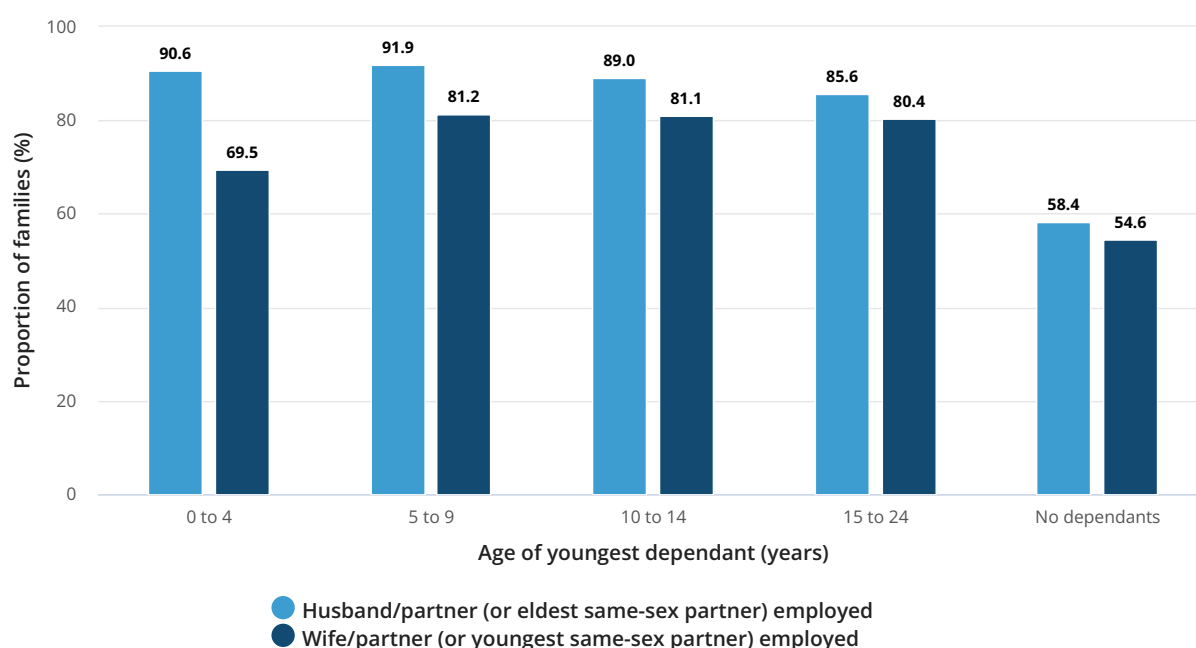


- Data sourced from Table 9 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads\)](#). State breakdowns and revised estimates for previous years are also available.

In June 2023, the proportion of couple families with dependants where the wife/partner (or youngest same-sex partner) was employed was 76.5%. This was lower than the proportion where the husband/partner (or eldest same-sex partner) was employed at 89.7%.

As the age of youngest dependant increased, the proportion of couple families where the husband/partner (or eldest same-sex partner) was employed fell from 90.6% for children aged 0-4 years to 85.6% for dependants aged 15-24. The proportion of couple families where the wife/partner (or youngest same-sex partner) was employed rose from 69.5% for children aged 0-4 years to 80.4% for dependants aged 15-24.

Graph 3 - Couples families by employment characteristics and age of youngest dependant, June 2023



- Data sourced from Table 3 and Table 9 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads\)](#). State breakdowns and revised estimates for previous years are also available.

One parent families

There were 1.1 million one parent families in June 2023, accounting for 14.7% of all families. Of these one parent families, 62.8% (690,000) had dependants (including children under 15), which is an increase of 69,000 (11.2%) since June 2013.

One parent families with dependants

The vast majority (83.0%) of one parent families with children and dependants were single mother families. Of all one parent families with children and dependants, 51.1% had a youngest dependant aged 0 - 9 years.

There were 480,000 one parent families where the parent was employed and had dependants, representing 69.4% of all one parent families with dependants. Of these families:

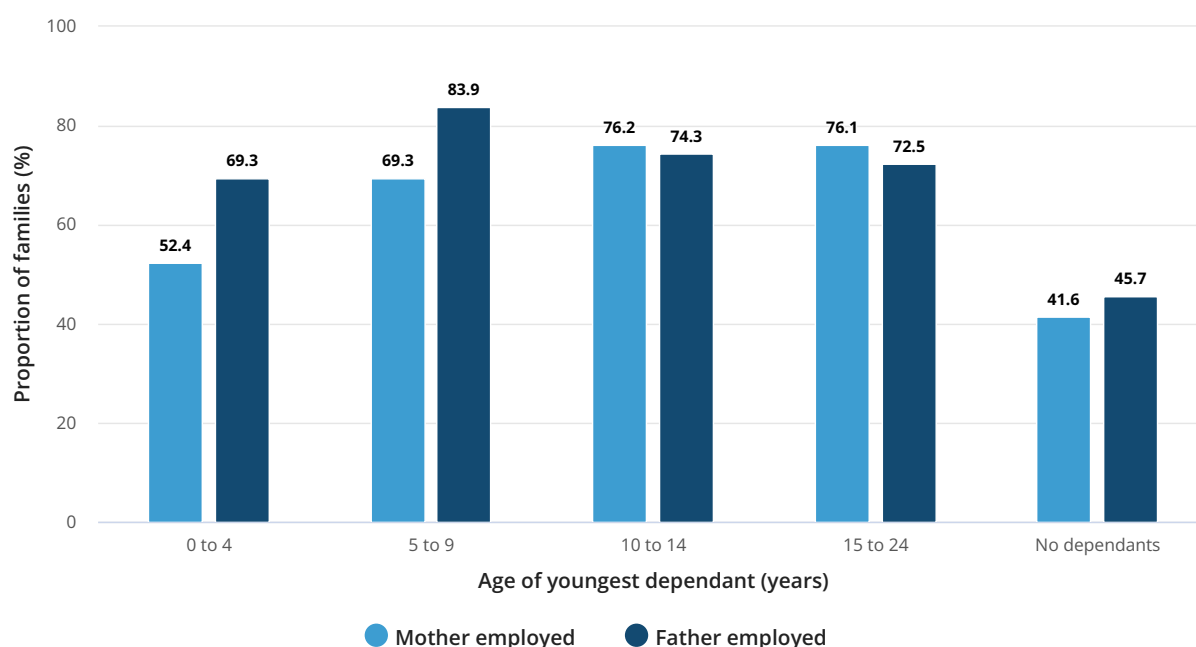
- 81.2% (390,000) had an employed single mother.
- 18.8% (90,000) had an employed single father.

In one parent families with dependants, 68.0% of single mothers were employed compared with 76.4% of single fathers.

Just below three-quarters (74.3%) of families with employed single mothers and dependants had mothers aged between 35 and 54 years.

The proportion of one parent families with dependants where the parent was employed generally increased with the age of the youngest dependant. The proportion with an employed parent was lowest when the youngest dependant was under 5 (53.5%) and the highest when the youngest dependant was between 10 and 14 (75.8%). This pattern was more prominent for single mothers.

Graph 4 - One parent families by employment characteristics and age of youngest dependant, June 2023



- Data sourced from Table 3 and Table 9 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads\)](#). State breakdowns and revised estimates for previous years are also available.

Jobless families

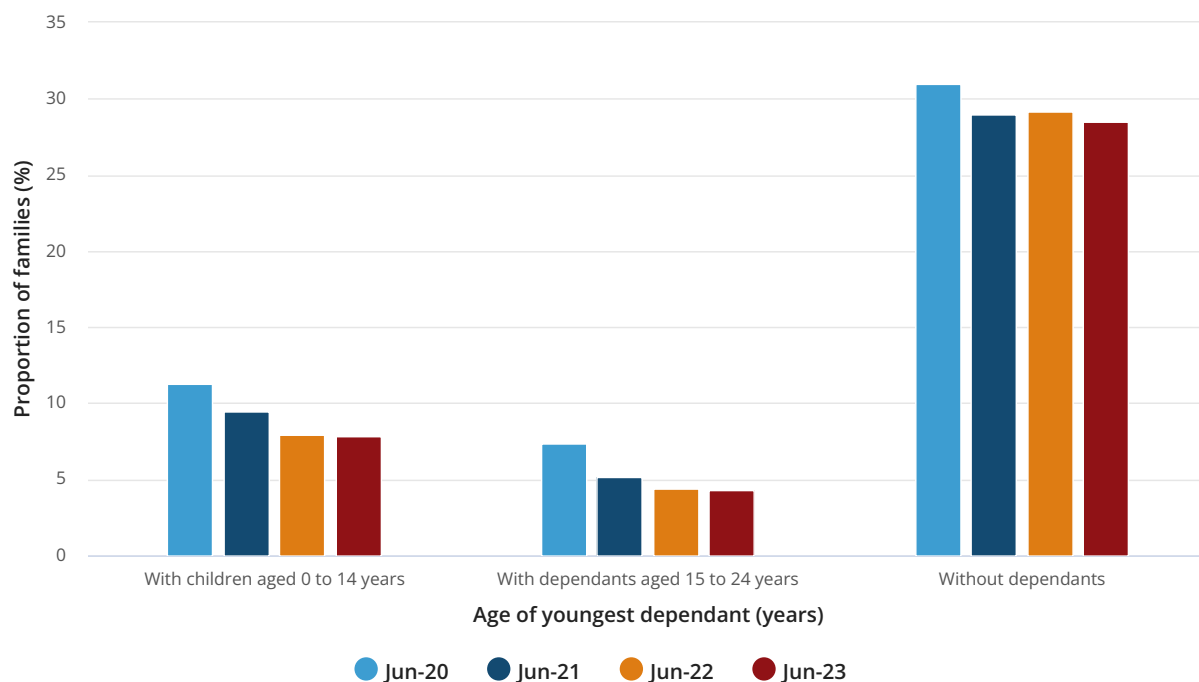
In June 2023, there were 1.4 million jobless families, remaining largely unchanged since June 2022. The share of jobless families fell from 19.2% to 18.9% of all families - jobless meaning each family member aged over 15 years was unemployed, retired or otherwise not in the labour force. Of these:

- 240,000 jobless families had dependants (also 240,000 in June 2022), representing 7.2% of all families with dependants.
- An estimated 405,000 children aged 0-14 years were living in jobless families (down from 410,000 in June 2022).

The number of jobless families with children under 15 (as a percentage of all families with

children under 15) decreased from 7.9% in June 2022 to 7.8% in June 2023.

Graph 5 - Jobless families by age of youngest dependant, June 2020 to June 2023



- Data sourced from Table 4 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads\)](#). State breakdowns and revised estimates for previous years are also available.

Jobless couple families with dependants

In June 2023, there were 80,000 jobless couple families with dependants (including children under 15 and dependant students aged 15-24 years), up from 73,000 in June 2022. 69,000 (85.8%) of these families had children under 15. An estimated 130,000 children aged 0-14 years were in jobless couple families.

Jobless one parent families with dependants

There were 160,000 jobless one parent families with dependants in June 2023, about one quarter (23.3%) of all one parent families with dependants. 90.8% of these jobless one parent families had children under 15. This equated to an estimated 270,000 children aged

0-14 years in these families.

Jobless families without dependants

In June 2023 there were 1.2 million jobless families without dependants, which represented 28.5% of all families without dependants. Of all jobless families without dependants:

- 1.1 million (90.4%) were couple families.
- 90,000 (7.7%) were one parent families.

Dependants aged 15-24 years

A person aged 15–24 years is a dependant if they are still attending school or attending a tertiary institution full-time and they live with one or both parents. However, they cannot be a dependant if they have a partner or child of their own who is also usually resident in the household. If that was the case, they would then form their own family within the household.

In June 2023, there were 1.4 million dependants (still attending school or attending a tertiary institution full-time) aged 15-24 years.

Of the 3.3 million families with children or dependants, 18.3% (620,000) had a youngest dependant aged between 15–24 years, of which 470,000 (76.2%) were couple families.

Households

From this issue, the ABS has introduced previously unpublished estimates for the number of households, types of households and average number of people per household. These estimates are based on independent demographic counts of households and household size which are used in benchmarking the families estimates.

The main differences between estimates for households and estimates for families is that multi-family households are split into their component family units (couple families, one parent families or other families) and households without families (group households and people living alone) are not included in families estimates.

In June 2023, there were 10.4 million households (in private dwellings). Of these,

- 7.1 million were households with one family.
- 200,000 were households with more than one family (multiple family households).
- 350,000 were group households of non-relatives.
- 2.8 million households were people living alone.

Average household size was 2.5 people in June 2023, down from 2.6 people a decade ago in June 2013.

More information on households is provided in Table H1 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-status-families/latest-release#data-downloads).

Data downloads

Tables

⬇ Download all (14.61 MB)

Table 1. Family types

⬇ [Download XLSX](#)
[391.26 KB]

Table 2. Families by state and territory

⬇ [Download XLSX](#)
[239.37 KB]

Table 3. Labour force characteristics of families

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[1.78 MB]

Table 4. Jobless families and their dependants

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[1.01 MB]

Table 5. Families by age of dependent children

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[508.44 KB]

Table 6. Families by number of dependent children

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[1.89 MB]

Table 7. Families by characteristics of wives, partners and mothers and age of youngest dependent child

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[3.85 MB]

Table 8. Families by state and territory and age of dependent children

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[386.82 KB]

Table 9. Families by characteristics of parents and age of youngest dependent child

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[2.11 MB]

Table 10. Families with no dependent children by characteristics of wives, partners and mothers

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[1.82 MB]

Table H1. Households and average household size (experimental estimates)

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[1.41 MB]

Quarterly estimates for the months March, June, September and December were introduced for the years 2019, 2020, 2021 and the first half of 2022. This was a temporary introduction to assist in understanding the major changes in the labour market during the pandemic and has not been extended into 2023.

Labour Force Status of Families microdata in DataLab

Labour Force Status of Families microdata is now available in ABS DataLab, released as a supplementary file for the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](#) (LLFS) microdata. All existing users of the LLFS microdata will automatically get access to the Labour Force Status of Families file and new users can apply for access to both files.

A detailed data item list for the Labour Force Status of Families microdata is available in [Microdata and TableBuilder: Labour Force Status of Families \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-status-families\)](#).

Labour Force Status of Families in Tablebuilder

The release of June 2022 and 2023 Labour Force Status of Families microdata into Tablebuilder has been delayed until next year due to ongoing delays while the ABS upgrades the infrastructure behind TableBuilder to support the load from the 2021 Census.. The previous release with data for the period June 2009 to June 2021 will remain available during this time.

Update on families data for 2015-2018

In June 2022, the ABS corrected an issue with some family coding for the period July 2014 to June 2018 which was affecting a range of family estimates in this publication. The issue is also impacting on, though to a lesser extent, the four "relationship in household" pivot table products (FM1-FM4) in [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](#), the Table 01 spreadsheet in that release, which contains estimates by social marital status, and the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](#) (LLFS) microdata. These estimates will be revised at a later date.

Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6224.0.55.001.

Data relating to the labour force status of families was also previously published in:

- [Labour Force, Australia: Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6224.0.55.001Main+Features1Jun%202004\)](#) (6224.0.55.001), 2004
- [Labour Force - Data on CD \(https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?and%5B%5D=subject%3A%226202.0.55.001%22&and%5B%5D=subject%3A%226224.0.55.001%22&sort=date\)](#) (6202.0.55.001), 2000-2016
- [Labour Force Status and other Characteristics of Families \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6224.0&viewtitle=Labour%20Force%20Status%20and%20other%20Characteristics%20of%20Families,%20Australia~Jun%202000~Latest~21/11/2000&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6224.0&issue=Jun%202000&num=&view=&\)](#) (6224.0), 1974-2000
- [Labour Force - Data on Microfiche \[GRPFAM\] \(https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=subject%3A%22Labour+Force+-+Data+on+Microfiche+%28GRPFAM%29%22&sort=-date\)](#) (6280.0), 1984-1997
- [Labour Force - Data on Microfiche \[GRPFST\] \(https://archive.org/details/australian-](#)

[statistics?query=subject%3A%22Labour+Force+-+Data+on+Microfiche+%28GRPFST%29%22&sort=-date\)](#) (6280.0), 1984-1997

- [Family Status and Employment Status of the Population \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6223.0Nov%201974-75\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6223.0Nov%201974-75) (6223.0), 1974-75

Methodology

[Labour Force Status of Families methodology, June 2023](#)